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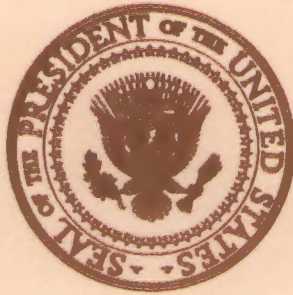
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## National Child Safety Awareness Month, 1985

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

May has been designated as National Child Safety Awareness Month this year, but for a mother or father who has suffered the tragedy of a missing child, the nightmare is not confined to one day, one week, or one month. It stays with them until their child is found. For all too many parents, it stays with them forever.

More than 1,500,000 children have been reported missing in the United States, but until recently there was little concerted action to deal with this problem. Today, however, a new spirit of activism is bringing together parents, law enforcement officials, and community agencies in an energetic drive to increase public awareness of the need to protect our Nation's children.

One of the most encouraging developments in this regard was the establishment of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. This Center disseminates educational material about child safety, offers information about voluntary identification procedures for young people, and maintains a toll-free hotline to help locate missing children. It is providing a needed focus for our Nation's efforts to stem this serious problem.

The safety of our children is everyone's responsibility, and by working together we can make a difference. It is important for parents to instruct their children at an early age and ensure that they know their complete name, address, and how to dial their telephone number. The public and private sectors can provide the assistance that is needed by children who are victims of abuse, including safe and secure shelter for runaway and homeless youth to protect them from the dangers they might encounter on the streets. Corporations can be helpful by publicizing the plight of missing children to facilitate their identification and return home.

The most important thing we can all do, however, is to create a society in which our children are respected, loved, and cherished. The family is the natural place for demonstrating this love and respect, but the spirit of respect for family values should be spread widely throughout society. Activities such as child pornography should be straightforwardly condemned as inconsistent with a society that truly loves its children and respects the integrity of the childhood years. By speaking up and making their voices heard, concerned Americans can make a big difference in the kind of society our children will grow up in and, even more, in their ability to grow up with the love and security that should be every child's birthright.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 33, has designated the month of May 1985 as "National Child Safety Awareness Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 1985 as National Child Safety Awareness Month. I call on all Americans to join the effort to protect our children to ensure a healthy and productive generation of Americans as our contribution to the future.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 29th day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

*Ronald Reagan*